

RCE-Preliminary Amendment dated August 27, 2004

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

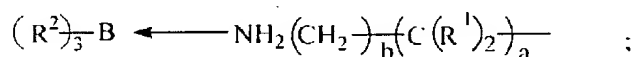
25. (Currently Amended) A method for repairing fuel tanks which comprises providing a fuel tank having a surface with a detected leak, providing a patch or plug having a surface to be attached to the fuel tank surface with a detected leak, the patch or plug comprising a multilayer laminate structure having one or more layers of a low energy surface material and one or more layers of a polymer having a fuel barrier property, coating the tank surface and/or the patch or plug surface with an adhesive, placing the patch or plug over the detected leak such that the adhesive is sandwiched between the patch or plug surface and the tank surface, pressing the patch or plug against the tank and allowing the adhesive to cure to bond together the patch or plug surface and the tank surface wherein the adhesive can support a load of 1334 N.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 25 wherein the adhesive comprises a polymerizable acrylic composition and an amine/organoborane complex.

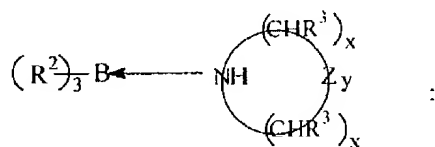
28. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein the organoborane is a trialkyl borane or alkyl cycloalkyl borane and the amine is selected from the group consisting of (1) amines having an amidine structural component; (2) aliphatic heterocycles having at least one nitrogen in the heterocyclic ring wherein the heterocyclic compound may also contain one or more nitrogen atoms, oxygen atoms, sulfur atoms, or double bonds in the heterocycle; (3) primary amines which in addition have one or more hydrogen bond accepting groups wherein there are at least two carbon atoms, preferably at least three carbon atoms, between the primary amine and the hydrogen bond accepting group, such that due to inter- or intramolecular interactions within the complex the strength of the B-N bond is increased; and (4) conjugated imines.

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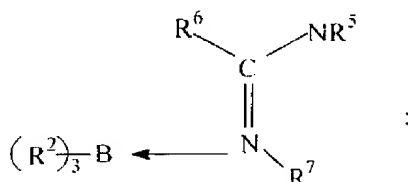
29. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 28 wherein the complex of the organoborane and the primary amine corresponds to the formula



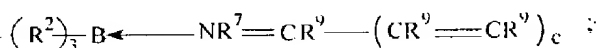
the organoborane heterocyclic amine complex corresponds to the formula



the organoborane amidine complex corresponds to the formula



and the organoborane conjugated imine complex corresponds to the formula



wherein B is boron; R^1 is separately in each occurrence hydrogen, a C_{1-10} alkyl or C_{3-10} cycloalkyl; R^2 is separately in each occurrence a C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl or two or more of R^2 may combine to form a cycloaliphatic ring structure; R^3 is separately in each occurrence hydrogen, a C_{1-10} alkyl or C_{3-10} cycloalkyl; R^4 is separately in each occurrence hydrogen, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, C_{6-10} aryl or alkaryl; R^5 , R^6 , and R^7 are separately in each occurrence hydrogen, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, or two or more of R^5 , R^6 and R^7 in any combination can combine to form a ring structure which can be a single ring or a multiple ring structure and the ring structure can include one or more of nitrogen, oxygen or unsaturation in the ring structure; R^9 is independently in each occurrence hydrogen, C_{1-10} alkyl or

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C₃₋₁₀ cycloalkyl, Y, -(C(R⁹)₂-(CR⁹=CR⁹))_c-Y or two or more of R⁹ can combine to form a ring structure, or one or more of R⁹ can form a ring structure with Y provided the ring structure is conjugated with respect to the double bond of the imine nitrogen: X is a hydrogen-bond accepting group with the proviso that where the hydrogen bond accepting group is an amine it must be secondary or tertiary; Y is independently in each occurrence hydrogen, N(R⁴)₂, OR⁴, C(O)OR⁴, a halogen or an alkylene group which forms a cyclic ring with R⁷ or R⁹; Z is separately in each occurrence oxygen or -NR⁴; a is separately in each occurrence an integer of from 1 to 10; b is separately in each occurrence 0 or 1, with the proviso that the sum of a and b should be from 2 to 10; c is separately in each occurrence an integer of from 1 to 10; x is separately in each occurrence an integer of 1 to 10, with the proviso that the total of all occurrences of x is from 2 to 10; and y is separately in each occurrence 0 or 1.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein the organo borane/amine complex comprises an aliphatic heterocyclic amine which is a five or six membered heterocyclic compound.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein the organo borane compound of the complex has three ligands selected from C₁₋₁₀ alkyl groups or phenyl groups, and the amine compound is selected from 1,6 diaminohexane, diethylamine, dibutylamine, diethylenetriamine, dipropylenediamine, 1,3 propylene diamine, and 1,2 propylene diamine.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein the organoborane compound of the complex has three ligands attached to the borane atom and which are selected from C₁₋₁₀ alkyl groups and phenyl and the amine compound is an alkanol amine or a diamine wherein the first amine group is a primary or secondary amine and the second amine is a primary amine.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein the amine compound of the complex is a polyoxyalkylene polyamine or a polyamine which is the reaction product of a diprimary amine and a compound having at least two groups which react with a primary amine.

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34. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 25 wherein the fuel tank is made of stainless steel, pre-coated or post-coated low-carbon steel, aluminum, bronze, electroplated zinc, nickel or galvaneal.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 25 wherein the fuel tank is made of metal or a multilayer structure having one or more layers of a polymer having fuel barrier property and one or more layers of a low energy surface material.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 35 wherein the low energy surface material is high density polyethylene and the fuel barrier polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyamides, fluoroelastomers, polyacetal homopolymers and copolymers, sulfonated and fluorinated high density polyethylene, ethylene vinyl alcohol polymers and copolymers, hydroxy-functionalized polyethers and polyesters, and branched polyesters.

46. (New) A method for repairing fuel tanks consisting essentially of the following steps:

(a) providing a fuel tank having a surface with a detected leak,

(b) providing a patch or plug having a surface to be attached to the fuel tank surface with a detected leak, the patch or plug comprising a multilayer laminate structure having one or more layers of a low energy surface material and one or more layers of a polymer having a fuel barrier property,

(c) coating the tank surface and/or the patch or plug surface with an adhesive,

(d) placing the patch or plug over the detected leak such that the adhesive is sandwiched between the patch or plug surface and the tank surface, and

(e) pressing the patch or plug against the tank and allowing the adhesive to cure to bond together the patch or plug surface and the tank surface wherein the adhesive can support a load of about 1334N and exhibits a fuel permeation rate of not more than about 46 g-mm/m²/day as determined by ASTM E 96-94.

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47. (New) The method of Claim 46 wherein the adhesive exhibits a fuel permeation rate of not more than about 12 g-mm/m²/day according to ASTM E96-94.

48. (New) The method of Claim 46 wherein the adhesive comprises a polymerizable acrylic composition and an amine organoborane complex.

49. (New) A method according to Claim 25 wherein the adhesive exhibits a fuel vapor permeation rate of not more than 46 g-mm/m²/day according to ASTM E96-94.

50. (New) A method according to Claim 49 wherein the adhesive exhibits a fuel vapor permeation rate of not more than 12 g-mm/m²/day according to ASTM E96-94.

51. (New) A method according to Claim 49 which does not include the use of a mechanical attachment means.

52. (New) A method for repairing fuel tanks which comprises providing a fuel tank having a surface with detected leaks, providing a patch or plug having a surface to be attached to the fuel tank surface with detected leaks, coating the tank surface and/or the patch or plug surface with an adhesive, placing the patch or plug over the detected leak(s) such that the adhesive is sandwiched between the patch or plug surface and the tank surface, pressing the patch or plug against the tank and allowing the adhesive to cure to bond together the patch or plug surface and the tank surface wherein the adhesive can support a load of 1334N.

53. (New) A method according to Claim 52 wherein the adhesive exhibits a fuel vapor permeation rate of not more than 46 g-mm/m²/day according to ASTM E 96-94.

54. (New) A method according to Claim 53 wherein the adhesive exhibits a fuel vapor permeation rate of not more than 12 g-mm/m²/day according to ASTM E 96-94.

55. (New) An assembly comprising a fuel tank having a crack or a hole;

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a patch disposed over the crack or hole;

and disposed between the fuel tank and the patch is an adhesive which can support a load of 1334N and which exhibits a fuel permeation rate of not more than 46 g-mm/m²/day.

56. (New) An assembly according to Claim 55 wherein the adhesive comprises an acrylic composition and an organoborane amine complex.

57. (New) An assembly according to Claim 56 wherein the adhesive exhibits a fuel vapor permeation rate of no more than about 12 g-mm/m²/day.

58. (New) An assembly according to Claim 56 wherein the assembly does not contain a mechanical attachment means.

59. (New) A fuel tank according to Claim 57 wherein the patch contains one or more standoffs which are disposed between the fuel tank and the patch.